

New Mexico **WILD!**

Spring/Summer 2018

The Semi-annual Publication of the
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance

Wild & Scenic Gila River—It's Time!

Chaco Threatened by Oil & Gas Drilling

Sabinoso Wilderness Finally Open!

Trump's Anti-Environmental Activities Exposed



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The Semiannual Publication of the
New Mexico Wilderness Alliance
VOLUME 15, NUMBER 1
SPRING 2018

Inside This Issue:

From the Executive Director	2-3
Sabinoso Wilderness Finally Open to Public	4
Rio Grande del Norte National Monument & Sabinoso Wilderness State Land Exchange	4
Student Field Trip: Native American Community Academy ...	5
Save Our Springs Campaign Victorious!	5
Pecos Wilderness Stewardship Update	6
Earth Matters Radio	6
Save What's Left	7
Federal Legislation Roundup	8
Bears Ears Amicus: An Attack on One Monument is an Attack on All	9
Agency Planning Updates	9
New Mexicans Call on President Trump to Leave New Mexico Monuments Alone	10
Wolf Recovery Plan and Lawsuit	11
Wild and Scenic River Heroes	11
Gila River Timeline and Testimonials	12-13
FAQ about Wild & Scenic Rivers	14
War on the Gila	15
Gila Area Loop Hike: Little Bear Canyon	16
New Mexico Conservation Infographic	16
Scorched Earth: Trump's Catastrophic Administrative Actions	17
Castner Range Protected	18
Raffle Raises Funds for New Mexico Wild	18
Upcoming Events	19
Wilderness Ranger Program Growing in 2018	19
Story Riders Program	19
Welcome New Staff!	20
UNM Wild Volunteers to Help with River Restoration Project	21
Winner of the 2019 Wolf Stamp Competition	21
State Legislature Update	22



ON THE COVER:
Gila River illustration
courtesy of Anderson
Design Group, a Nashville-
based illustration studio
that specializes in classic
poster design. Founder Joel
Anderson leads a team of
artists to create romantic,
hand-illustrated travel poster
art inspired by the Golden
Age of posters from the early
20th century. Their prints and
books are available at
www.ADGStore.com

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT...A WILD TIME!

BY MARK ALLISON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Thanks for picking up a copy of *New Mexico Wild!* In this edition, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which represents the highest level of protection for rivers. New Mexicans can be proud that sections of the Rio Grande were among the first protected after the law's passage in 1968. (And with your help, we hope to make the Gila and San Francisco rivers the next ones designated.)



This anniversary reminds us of an era when government recognized challenges and offered solutions, passing legislation like the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. At its best, that was an era that was hopeful and confident with thought to balance and posterity. This was also a time in our not too distant conservation history that was much more bipartisan.

What a contrast to today. Instead of crafting common sense legislation and policies with an adult's sense of moral duty to tomorrow, today's administration conducts itself in the most crass, cynical and selfish manner imaginable, behaving with the mindset of looters, determined to carry off as much as they can before the grownups return or the world ends. This is what political consultant John Podesta means when he talks about "Trump's chilling contempt for future generations."

Current efforts to dismantle bedrock environmental and conservation laws, policies and rules are breathtaking. These actions include limiting transparency and public input (i.e., democratic participation), reducing oversight and accountability of industry, discounting consideration of the commons in favor of profit for the few, disregarding conflicts of interest and self-dealing, ignoring science, and favoring special interests and campaign donors over the public welfare – **all while presiding over the largest rollback of federal land protections ever.** For those tempted to dismiss these assertions as hyperbolic, please see page 17 for a partial catalogue of travesties visited upon planet Earth and the American people in the last year.

With this as the backdrop, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke recently bragged, "This is just the tip of the iceberg. Next year will be an exciting year for the Department and the American people." I for one have had enough excitement, thank you very much.

As Elizabeth Kolbert pointed out in the *New Yorker* (1/22/18), "Essential to protecting wilderness is that there be places wild enough to merit protection. Once a sage-grouse habitat has been crisscrossed with roads, or a national monument riddled with mines, the rationale for preserving it is gone. Why try to save something that's already ruined? ... In the decades to come, one can hope that many of the Trump Administration's mistakes—on tax policy, say, or trade—will be rectified. But the destruction of the country's last unspoiled places is a loss that can never be reversed."

Despite all this, New Mexico can celebrate some remarkable victories and progress over the last year, and we highlight them in this edition. These include the first and only expanded Wilderness in the Trump administration, a David versus Goliath victory over the Department of Justice on behalf

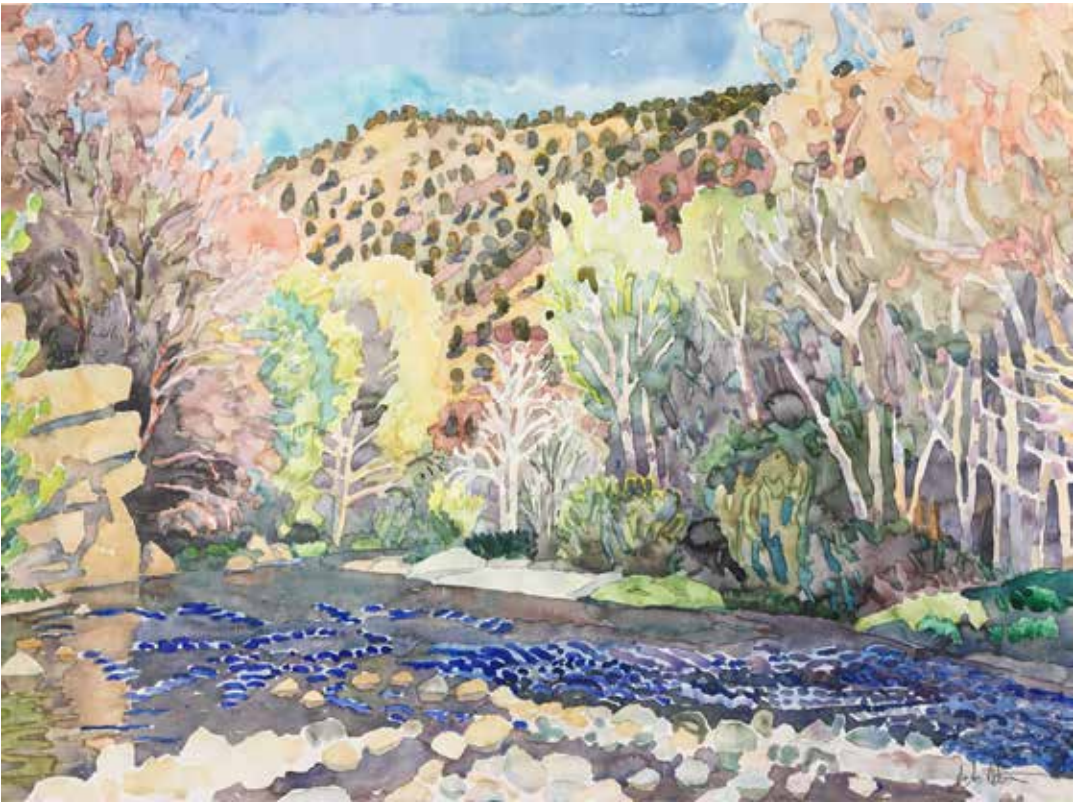


of Mexican gray wolves, the defeat of a proposal to allow energy development in the sensitive Jemez Mountains, a reprieve of new oil and gas lease sales around Greater Chaco, and what we hope to be a successful outcome of saving our national monuments from elimination or massive reductions.

You'll see in these pages why today, New Mexico can proudly boast of having hands-down the two staunchest public lands champions in the United States Senate, Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich. These public servants understand the value of public lands and Wilderness and are powerful defenders. That's not an excuse for us to sit on our hands but rather an increased call to action and an obligation on our part – yours and mine – to further encourage and support these efforts, regardless of how we voted or what political party we belong to.

New Mexico has rallied during this difficult time. Our ranks are growing, which is heartening and inspiring. Encourage your friends and family to get involved, too. We need them. I can promise they'll feel good joining thousands of others doing their part to defend New Mexico's wilderness, water and wildlife.

For the wild things,



"Gila River" watercolor by Rick DeMont. See more of his paintings at www.rickdemontart.com.

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The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and continued respect of New Mexico's wildlands and Wilderness areas.

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What is Wilderness?

The Wilderness Act of 1964 established the National Wilderness Preservation System to preserve the last remaining wildlands in America. The Wilderness Act, as federal policy, secures an enduring resource of Wilderness for the people. Wilderness is defined as an area that has primarily been affected by the forces of nature with the imprint of humans substantially unnoticeable. It is an area that offers outstanding opportunity for solitude or a primitive or unconfined type of recreation, and an area that contains ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

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NORTHERN NEW MEXICO REPORT

Sabinoso Wilderness Finally Open to Public



The public can now visit the beautiful Sabinoso Wilderness, just an hour and a half east of Las Vegas, N.M., in San Miguel County. Readers of this publication will recall Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke touring the area on horseback in July 2017 with Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, both D-N.M., and Bureau of Land Management staff, led by New Mexico Wild's traditional community organizer, John Olivas.

New Mexico Wild called on Secretary Zinke to accept the donation of the private Rimrock Rose Ranch from the Wilderness Land Trust to provide public access and increase the size of the Wilderness area by 3,595 acres, bringing it to 19,625 acres.

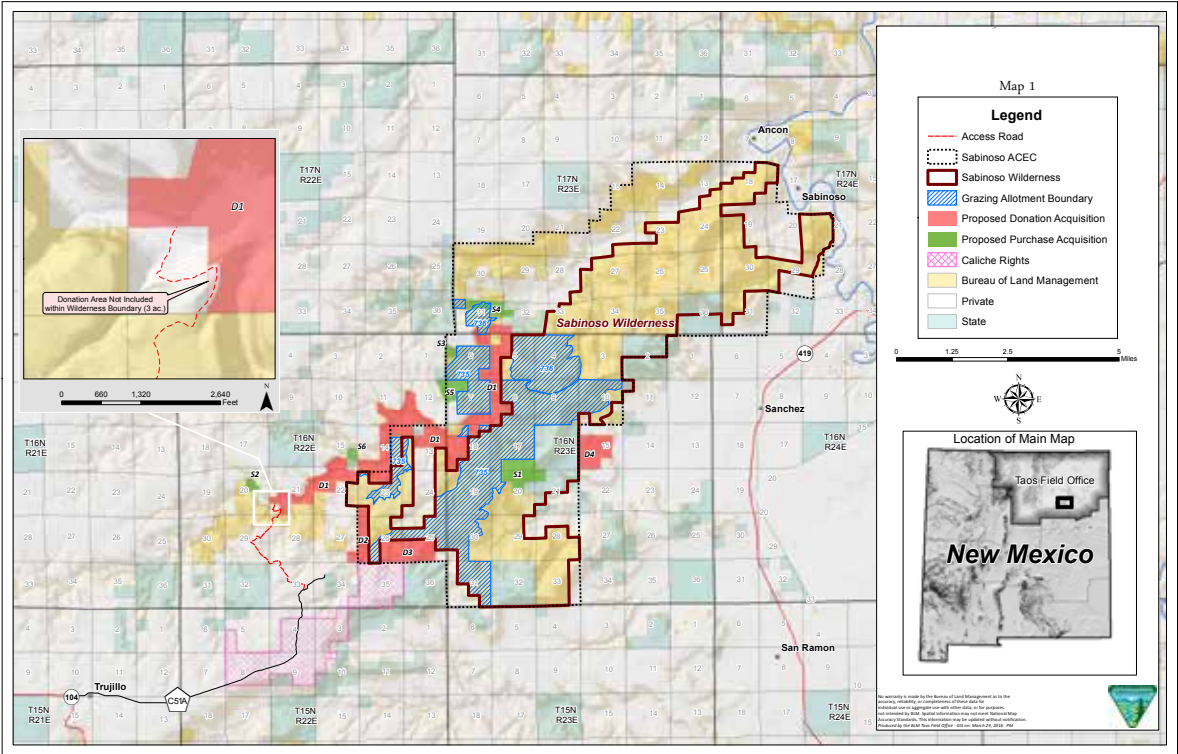
In November of 2017, we applauded Secretary Zinke's decision to accept the donation.

That announcement not only marked the first and, so far, **only expansion of a Wilderness area in the country by the Trump administration**, but also the culmination of a nearly decade-long effort. New Mexico Wild organized dozens of volunteers who donated nearly 1,000 hours in the last two years to make the former ranch ready for transfer to the National Wilderness Preservation System by removing fencing, corrals and other structures.

The Sabinoso Wilderness is a rugged back-country area characterized by its remoteness, red rock canyons, archaeological sites and solitude. It is home to elk, mule deer, mountain lions and wild turkey. The headwaters of the Canadian River run through Cañon Largo, a well-traveled route used for centuries by native people and by cavalry traveling from Fort Union to Fort Bascom in the 19th century.

Interest from residents of San Miguel County and other parts of New Mexico has been high, and New Mexico Wild is elated that the public will finally be able to visit this beautiful area to hike, backpack, photograph, hunt and ride horses. This is a sensitive area, so please tread lightly. Visit our website for upcoming guided trips to Sabinoso.

Access to the Sabinoso Wilderness:
From Interstate 25 near Las Vegas, N.M., take exit 345 onto Highway 104 heading east. Travel 32.7 miles east to Trujillo, and turn left onto San Miguel County Road C51A. Travel east for approximately 7 miles on an improved dirt road. Follow BLM directional signs by turning left at the Y and heading north for 3 miles on the lightly maintained route to the Sabinoso Wilderness parking area. This road is not passable when wet. Please leave gates as you find them. 🐾



Sabinoso Wilderness has been expanded to 19,625 acres.



Officials on horseback tour of the Sabinoso Wilderness in July 2017. Photo: Senator Tom Udall staff

Rio Grande del Norte National Monument & Sabinoso Wilderness State Land Exchange

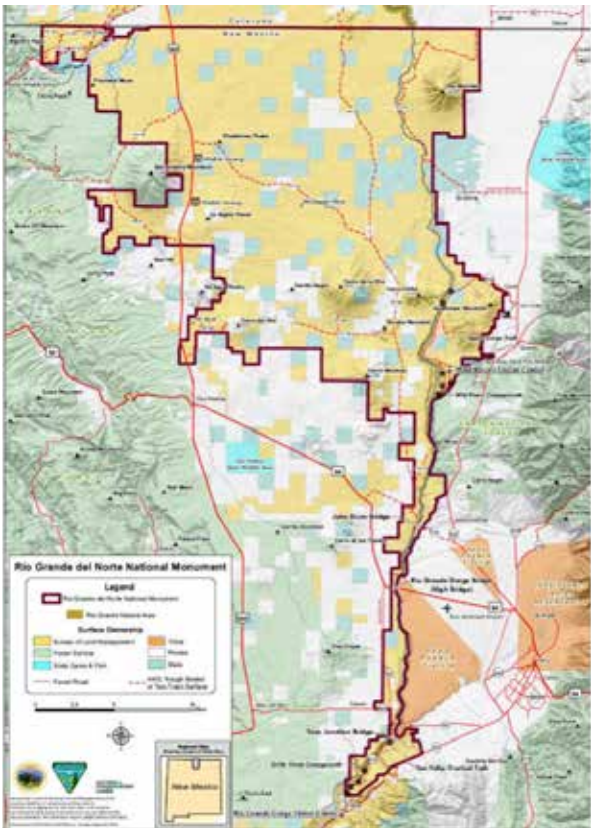
BY JOHN OLIVAS, STAFF

New Mexico Wild welcomed the announcement that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the New Mexico State Land Office (SLO) have entered into an agreement to initiate a land exchange that includes Taos and San Miguel counties.

The proposal would swap about 43,000 acres of state trust lands and minerals in the Río Grande del Norte National Monument and Sabinoso Wilderness for up to about 70,000 acres of scattered parcels of federal lands throughout the state.

New Mexico Wild has been publicly calling for a state land exchange since the creation of the national monument in 2013. By eliminating mixed BLM-SLO ownership, the proposed exchange would increase management efficiency and recreational access opportunities.

Completion of this exchange will require an environmental assessment (EA) in conformance with the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act. The EA process will involve extensive collaboration with members of the public, tribal entities and local governments. 🐾



Rio Grande del Norte National Monument encompasses 242,555 acres

STUDENT FIELD TRIP – Native American Community Academy

Thirty-five students and two teachers from the Native American Community Academy learned about the Rio Grande during an outing to the Orilla Verde Recreation Area on Nov. 17, 2017. New Mexico Wild led the students as they learned about the ecology of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument (RGDN) and took part in a hike and data collection to study the water quality of the river. The Bureau of Land Management’s ecologist and recreational manager helped facilitate the discussion.

The students had lunch with combat veterans from the Southwest Conservation Corps, who explained what the corps does and the important restoration project they were working on

along the river. The students were given the opportunity to talk to the corps members and then worked along with them to remove invasive trees along the river. New Mexico Wild staff also gave the students a presentation on the history of the conservation efforts to protect the monument.

Thank you to Conservation Lands Foundation for the opportunity to partner and to expose urban Native American students to the value of protected public lands. None of the students had visited RGDN previously, and it was particularly gratifying to introduce them to some of the rich cultural and historical values and traditional uses protected by the national monument. 🌲



Native American Community Academy students volunteered in the Orilla Verde Recreation Area and learned about the ecology of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. Photos: Mark Allison.



Save Our Springs Campaign Victorious!

BY JUDY CALMAN, STAFF



After a two-year fight to “Save Our Springs” from proposed geothermal energy development in the Jemez, New Mexico Wild is thrilled to announce a

victory. The Santa Fe National Forest has determined that 195,000 acres of the Jemez District adjacent to the Valles Caldera National Preserve, and originally including parts of nine Inventoried Roadless Areas, will be off limits to geothermal energy development.

This represents a significant victory for New Mexico Wild, the All Pueblo Council of Governors, our partners and everyone who cares about this beloved and extremely sensitive riparian area, including, of course, the numerous hot springs. Nearly 1,000 of you wrote comments or attended meetings opposing the prospect of heavy industrial development and drilling.



New Mexico Wild’s Save Our Springs campaign was successful in raising awareness of threats to the Jemez Mountains hot springs.

The choice of this “No-Leasing Alternative” means that the Forest Plan will now be amended to preclude geothermal leasing in the Jemez Ranger District, and that amendment will be carried forward into the new Forest Plan as the Santa Fe continues its plan revision.

This is proof that together we can make our voices heard and that persistence pays off. **We thank the Santa Fe National Forest for weighing the evidence, considering the alternatives, and ultimately making the correct decision.**

The next time you take friends or family up to the Jemez to marvel at the beauty or to recreate, be sure to reflect on how close we came to losing it, and be sure to give yourself a pat on the back for doing your part to protect it. 🌲



PECOS WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

BY BERNARD TIBBETTS, SANTA FE COMMUNITY ORGANIZER



From left: Reinforcing directional trail sign; Resting at La Vega; Replacing directional trail signs

Thanks to the efforts of all who volunteered their time in 2017 to improve several trails in the Pecos Wilderness.

Our focus was on evaluating trail and sign conditions along the La Vega Loop, which encompasses about 12 miles of trails, including the Lower Nambe, Upper Nambe, Rio Nambe and Winsor trails. The contributions of our volunteers enabled us to order 10 new Wilderness directional trail signs, replace one Wilderness directional trail sign and two posts, identify work needed on

Lower Nambe Trail, identify bridge debris to be removed at the Rio Nambe crossing, and select locations to install two benches along the Winsor Trail below the Wilderness boundary.

In 2018, we will complete this work and begin another 26 miles of trail stewardship. If you would like to volunteer this summer (usually on weekends), check the New Mexico Wild website events page for specific dates or contact Bernard Tibbetts at bernard@nmwild.org or call (505) 603-9120. 🏔️

Here are some of our objectives:

- **May** – Install two benches on the Winsor Trail.
- **June** – Complete trail work and replace nine directional trail signs.
- **June** – Remove bridge debris at the Rio Nambe crossing.
- **July-August** – New trail stewardship projects.

Earth Matters Radio



New Mexico Wild wants to recognize the great work being done by the hosts/producers of the Earth Matters program on Gila/Mimbres Community Radio in Silver City. Keeping citizens abreast of environmental issues are (clockwise) Donna Stevens of the Upper Gila Watershed Alliance, Allyson Siwik of the Gila Resources Information Project, and Kevin Bixby of The Southwest Environmental Center, shown interviewing Congressman Filemon Vela. New Mexico Wild staffer Nathan Newcomer is also one of the hosts.



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SAVE WHAT'S LEFT

BY RUSSELL BEGAYE, NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENT, AND EDWARD PAUL TORRES
ALL PUEBLO COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS CHAIRMAN



From left: Russell Begaye, Navajo Nation President. Photo courtesy Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce; Edward Paul Torres, All Pueblo Council of Governors Chairman. Photo courtesy National Museum of the American Indian.

Last year, the All Pueblo Council of Governors, a body composed of 19 sovereign Pueblo nations, hosted a historic summit between the Pueblo governors and the president and vice president of the Navajo Nation to focus attention on how all tribal nations in the Southwest can work together to protect sacred sites in the Greater Chaco Canyon region.

In the 400-year history of the council, this marked the first time the Navajo Nation was represented. This meeting, held at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque, was convened to facilitate further government-to-government consultation with federal agencies – including the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs and National Park Service – over actions or management plans that may affect Chaco Canyon, traditional cultural properties and sacred sites in the Greater Chaco landscape.

One hundred eleven years ago, in 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt created the 36,000-acre Chaco Culture National Historical Park, ensuring that many of the region's most significant and awe-inspiring ancient ruins were protected for generations to come. While protection of this park unit was a very important first step, thousands of archaeological sites lie outside the park throughout the San Juan Basin. Some of these sites are more than 12,000 years old.

This area was historically the center of Puebloan culture and economic life. Over many generations, our people built great houses, astronomical observation sites and ceremonial kivas across the Four Corners region. These sites continue to be places of prayer and pilgrimage as well as a living connection to our ancestors. Our water, our lands, our culture and our livelihoods depend upon this landscape. All of these things are threatened

as industrial development expands in the San Juan Basin.

As we celebrate the anniversary of Chaco Park in March, we call on the BLM to increase protections for the Greater Chaco Canyon region. Most of this area is publicly owned land managed by the BLM, yet the BLM has already leased 90 percent of the area to oil and gas drilling. **We, as representatives of the Pueblo and Navajo people, are calling on the agency to protect what's left**, including areas where leased land hasn't been developed yet. Around 16,000 oil and gas wells pepper our ancestral landscape, as do more than 15,000 miles of industrial access roads.

We understand that much of Greater Chaco has already been leased and developed and that future drilling in the region is virtually certain to continue. But we need public engagement to make our voices heard as the BLM plans for future management of lands in the Greater Chaco region. As the BLM updates its land-use plan, known as a Resource Management Plan, we have the best opportunity in many years for the BLM to acknowledge the significance of the Greater Chaco landscape by taking bold steps to protect the area from future oil and gas development. We urge the BLM in their RMP process to protect a larger percentage of the lands contained in Greater Chaco.

We do not oppose energy development as a whole – it has positively benefited many communities in New Mexico. We simply believe it is time to recognize that the BLM needs to balance energy and development needs with protecting the few areas of our cultural landscape that remain intact and undeveloped.

Our culture, both past and present, is inextricably linked to our land, including that managed by the BLM. We continue to have serious concerns about the impacts caused by oil and gas development and fear that decisions made by the BLM may further facilitate development in areas that are more valuable to us when left undeveloped.

Join us in calling on the BLM to create a new chapter of the ancient Chaco story by setting our sacred sites off limits to development.

Our Navajo and Pueblo communities look forward to working together on this and other issues in the future to ensure our ancestral homelands are protected for future generations. 🏔️



Energy development threatens the very doorstep of Chaco National Historical Park. Photo: Joelle Marier.

Thanks to the All Pueblo Council of Governors, the Navajo Nation, Senators Udall and Heinrich, Representatives Luján and Lujan-Grisham, New Mexico Wild and our partners, we are gratified that the Bureau of Land Management's planned oil and gas lease sales for the Greater Chaco area planned for March 8 have been canceled due to overwhelming community opposition. This would not have happened but for New Mexicans making their voices heard. We look forward to the day when protection of the Greater Chaco area is made permanent.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION ROUNDUP



From left: Organ Mountains WSA; Río Grande del Norte National Monument. Photos: Bob Wick

CERROS DEL NORTE CONSERVATION ACT (S. 432)

New Mexico Wild joined a coalition of business owners, sportsmen, tribal leaders, local elected officials and others to applaud the U.S. Senate unanimously passing the Cerros del Norte Conservation Act just days before Christmas.

The legislation would provide extra protection for special areas within Río Grande del Norte National Monument by designating two new Wilderness areas – Cerro del Yuta and Río San Antonio. Because only Congress can designate Wilderness, Sens. Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall, both D-N.M., first introduced the bill to protect these critical areas following the national monument designation in 2013.

The proposed Wilderness areas within the national monument serve as one of the world's great avian migratory routes and are home to important species like pronghorn and elk. The legislation would also safeguard world-class recreation opportunities already enjoyed within the national monument, such as hiking, hunting and fishing. The two proposed Wilderness areas will comprise 21,540 acres of the 242,500-acre national monument northwest of Taos.

"From the tops of Cerro de la Olla and Ute Mountain, to the depths of the Río Grande Gorge, the Río Grande del Norte is one of the most spectacular places on earth," Heinrich said. "New Mexico's community-driven monuments protected iconic landscapes that have long been revered. This legislation will further complete the vision of the diverse coalition and stakeholders who fought so hard to protect (the monument) and will preserve traditional practices and boost New Mexico's growing outdoor recreation economy. By designating the most rugged and unique habitat in the Río Grande del Norte as wilderness, we can protect New Mexico's natural heritage for our children and for generations to come."

ANTIQUITIES ACT OF 2018 (S. 2354)

New Mexico Wild welcomed the introduction of the America's Natural Treasures of Immeasurable Quality Unite, Inspire, and Together Improve the Economies of States Act of 2018 ("The ANTIQUITIES Act" of 2018) in the Senate on Jan. 30. Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M. sponsored and introduced the bill and Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and 15 other senators co-sponsored the legislation.

This legislation would protect 51 national monuments designated by executive authority dating back to 1996, including those threatened by President Trump. New Mexico Wild welcomes the senators' leadership in taking steps to enhance these national monuments, including expanding protections for the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah. We are elated that the bill would designate more than 249,000 acres of federal public lands in New Mexico's two newest national monuments as Wilderness.

"This legislation makes it crystal clear that monuments designated through the Antiquities Act of 1906 may not be altered by future presidents because only Congress has the authority to change a national monument designation," Udall said. "From Río Grande del Norte to Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, to Bears Ears and Grand Staircase, our national monuments enjoy broad support and provide unmatched economic, recreational, and cultural value to New Mexico and the nation."

"New Mexicans are rightly proud of the importance of these areas to our natural and cultural heritage," said Mark

Allison, executive director of New Mexico Wild. "This bill recognizes and responds to the extreme attacks President Trump has leveled against our nation's bedrock conservation laws, our national monuments and public lands in general. Once again, Senators Udall and Heinrich have demonstrated the vision and leadership to go to bat for New Mexicans and protect the Land of Enchantment. They are doing what we all want the rest of Congress to be doing—offering solutions."

THE ORGAN MOUNTAINS-DESERT PEAKS CONSERVATION ACT (S.441)

The bill, introduced by New Mexico Democratic Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich, was heard in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on Feb. 7. It would designate eight Wilderness areas within the national monument totaling 241,067 acres. Eighty percent of the proposed Wilderness is already managed as such and includes eight Wilderness Study Areas.

Legislation to safeguard the Wilderness in Doña Ana County was first introduced by for-

**Thank You Senator Udall and Senator Heinrich
for Supporting
New Mexico's National Monuments!**



mer Sen. Jeff Bingaman in 2009 in the 111th Congress, and then again by Sens. Udall and Heinrich in the 112th and 113th Congresses. In 2014, President Obama established the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

Hunting, hiking, camping, horseback riding, firefighting, law enforcement activities and border security would continue in the Wil-

derness areas. The Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks contains approximately 306 bird species and 78 mammal species, including golden eagles, mule deer, javelina, cougar, ringtail cat and quail.

A 2016 poll showed 78 percent of citizens in Doña Ana County support the protection of Wilderness within the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

“Protecting wilderness within the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks will preserve rich tribal and Hispano heritage that is vital to our community across the country. The Wilderness areas keep us connected to our families, traditions and the land itself,” said Rafael Gomez, tribal councilman from Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. 🏔️

BEARS EARS AMICUS

An Attack on One Monument is an Attack on All

Last year, President Trump directed Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to “review” all national monuments over 100,000 acres that had been designated since 1996. New Mexico’s most recent national monuments, Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks, were on the list. Zinke reported his findings to the president, recommending boundary adjustments to several monuments and management adjustments to several others.

Management adjustments were recommended for New Mexico’s monuments, but no action has yet been taken. However, despite his clear lack of authority to do so, President Trump signed a proclamation shrinking Utah’s Bears Ears National Monument by 85 percent and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument by approximately half, potentially opening up hundreds of thousands of acres to new

oil, gas, and uranium development.

Lawsuits have already been filed by a coalition of tribes regarding Bears Ears, and we expect more will be filed in the future. We remain committed to doing everything we can to ensure complete protection of our monuments here at home. We stand in solidarity with those fighting to protect Utah’s national monuments and will be filing amicus or “friend of the court” briefs on their behalf. Amicus briefs are memos to the court outlining a party’s interest in the case and support for one side. We believe filing an amicus is important



both because we want to stand with defenders in other states and because we want to firmly assert our position that the president lacks authority to change monuments designated by his predecessors. 🏔️

AGENCY PLANNING UPDATES

Three of New Mexico’s Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Offices, as well as all five of the state’s national forests, are undergoing Resource Management Plan and Forest Plan revisions. These are the bird’s-eye-view plans for each area that guide the agencies’ decisions over a period of 20 to 30 years. The revision process is critical to our mission because it is where decisions are made about which areas will be open to oil and gas leasing, which special places will be managed for protection of their wilderness qualities, how endangered species will be preserved and more.

On the forests, we expect draft plans in 2018 for the Santa Fe, Carson and Gila, as well as possibly for the Cibola. Each of these drafts will contain an inventory of lands with Wilderness characteristics (lands that meet Wilderness criteria, but which have not been designated as Wilderness by Congress), an inventory of river segments which meet the criteria for Wild and Scenic River designation, and plans for protecting endangered species.

On the BLM side, both Carlsbad and Farmington are expected to issue their draft plans this spring, outlining how they will manage the small amount of remaining unleased land



View of the Cibola National Forest by New Mexico Wild Wilderness Ranger Hailey Henck.

surrounding Chaco Culture National Historical Park, whether to protect the Areas of Critical Environmental Concern the New Mexico Wild nominated around Carlsbad, and how areas with Wilderness characteristics will be managed.

We will send out updates, reminders and talking points when there is an opportunity for the public to engage on these plans. If you aren’t already receiving our action alerts, please go to www.nmwild.org to sign up so you can stay on top of the most up-to-date information. 🏔️

NEW MEXICANS CALL ON PRESIDENT TRUMP TO LEAVE NEW MEXICO MONUMENTS ALONE

Following President Trump's actions on Dec. 5, 2017, to shrink the Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments in Utah, New Mexicans reasserted their support for Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Río Grande del Norte national monuments and demanded President Trump leave the Land of Enchantment's national monuments alone.

Of the over 2.8 million comments submitted to the Department of Interior during a national "review," 99 percent expressed support for maintaining/expanding national monuments. Of those that specifically mentioned Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Río Grande del Norte, more than 95 percent of them requested that those monuments not be altered. Statements from New Mexicans in response:



U.S. Sen. Tom Udall: "Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Río Grande del Norte help drive New Mexico's outdoor recreation and tourism economy; they sustain hundreds of good jobs, and they are part of what makes our state a wonderful place to visit and live. While Secretary Zinke has assured me that he doesn't plan major changes, the question of New Mexico's monuments is now in President Trump's hands. [T]his fight is not over, and New Mexicans should keep calling and writing and making their voices heard."



U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich: "The Department of Interior's report is based on hearsay and erroneous data. There's no question that it threatens both of New Mexico's community-driven monuments that permanently protected iconic landscapes, increased recreational access, and have proven to be major drivers for our local economies. We have a moral responsibility as a nation to our children and all future generations of Americans to protect and conserve our natural and cultural heritage."

Editor's Note: As of the date of this publication, President Trump has made no announcement about the fate of New Mexico's national monuments and they remain in jeopardy.



Carrie Hamblen, CEO/president of the Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce: "Our locally owned businesses continue to benefit from the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. Changing the language of the proclamation, as suggested by Secretary Zinke's report, would negatively impact the nationwide appeal of OMDP to visitors to our area and thus affect our local economy."



Steve Harris, Far Flung Adventures: "I have a small outfitting business on the Río Grande. The Secretary of Interior's report is extremely frustrating because we've counted on the new National Monument to lift up our recreational tourism business."



New Mexico Attorney General Hector Balderas: "President Trump simply has no legal authority to alter monument designations under the Antiquities Act ... If the President chooses to continue these attacks and comes after either Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks or Río Grande del Norte, I will fight him every step of the way."



Fernando Clemente, sportsman and president of the Friends of the Organ Mountains Desert Peaks: "Sportsmen and women don't want or need modifications to the existing monument proclamation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument. We worked within our own community, with local stakeholders, and with the Department of Interior to get the proclamation right the first time. The (monument), as currently managed, already protects our ability to hunt here for generations to come."



U.S. Marine combat veteran Jeff Swanson: "Our national monuments ... are an important part our country's identity, and we are known the world over for our protected lands and waters. Veterans returning from war find strength and resilience from our lands and waters and are able to heal and grow. Attacking any of our national monuments is an attack on our country's values and natural heritage."



All Pueblo Council of Governors Chairman E. Paul Torres: "Our Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks (OMDP), Río Grande del Norte (RGDN), Bears Ears and Canyons of the Ancients National Monuments represent landmarks in the deeply rooted history of our shared Puebloan ancestral ties to our cultural way of life, and in the American public lands system. These lands are our homeland. They always have been and will always be. We are the ancestors of our future generations. Our ancestors are buried there, and we can hear their songs and prayers on every mesa and in every canyon. For us the very landscape is part of all that is sacred. Any reduction ... through executive action would be illegal and undermine our tribal sovereignty. This review and potential for any change, is a slap in the face to the members of our Tribes and an affront to Indian people all across the country."



U.S. Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham: "President Trump's decision to dramatically reduce ... Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments is a short-sighted corporate giveaway that undermines two of our nation's greatest national treasures. I will continue to fight to protect America's public lands and national monuments, including the Río Grande del Norte and the Organ Mountains in New Mexico, for the benefit of our children and grandchildren."



Rev. Virginia Bairby, pastor of First Presbyterian Church Taos: “As a Christian and as a citizen of Taos, I am deeply troubled by Secretary Zinke’s recommended changes to the Río Grande del Norte National Monument. These changes are bad news for the earth, for Native People, and for the well-being of our entire community.”



Mayor of Questa and Taos County Commissioner Mark Gallegos: “Nearly every local elected official, including myself, supported the designations of our national monuments. That’s because [they] are good for business, enhance our quality of life, and provide a place for our residents to hike, camp, bike, hunt, fish, and more.”



U.S. Rep. Ben Ray Luján: “The Río Grande del Norte leaves a lasting impression on all those who visit and all those who benefit from the land. I oppose any attempt to undermine the [monument] – this treasure of northern New Mexico must be protected and preserved for future generations.”

Wolf Recovery Plan and Lawsuit

BY JUDY CALMAN, STAFF



Mexican wolves have faced a long, tough road back to the wild. Their most recent challenge has been the creation of a recovery plan by the Fish and Wildlife Service, the agency tasked with managing the species. A recovery plan is supposed to outline the steps necessary for the species to be considered “recovered” and eligible for removal from the endangered species list. Recovery criteria had not been revised since 1982, some 16 years before any Mexican wolves were released into the wild. Various individuals and groups filed a lawsuit two years ago to compel the service to update the recovery plan, and the agency agreed in a settlement to do so by November 2017.

We believe the final plan issued in November has serious flaws. Among its problems are:

- the population would be capped at 320 (meaning that delisting and removals for any reason would be possible once the population reaches that point) despite a scientific panel of wolf biologists determining a self-sustaining population would not occur until 750 wolves are in the wild;
- a reliance on Mexico, a country over which the Fish and Wildlife Service has no jurisdiction, for recovery;
- and too much deference to the often-hostile game commissions of Arizona and New Mexico.



New Mexico Wild’s 2018 Mexican Wolf Stamp Contest winning artwork by Lobo Reincarnated Artist Nayana.

We feel the problems are serious enough to appeal the plan. We filed a lawsuit in February with representation by the Western Environmental Law Center. We will keep our members updated on this litigation as well as all other aspects of wolf reintroduction. 🐾



Wild and Scenic River Heroes



Stewart Udall. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Remarks of President Lyndon Johnson upon signing the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act on Oct. 2, 1968: “A few summers ago, ...”, after Secretary Udall [Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall] took his lovely family on a float trip of high adventure down the turbulent Colorado River, he returned to Washington and said that every individual and every family should get to know at least one river.

An unspoiled river is a very rare thing in this Nation today. Their flow and vitality have been harnessed by dams and...it makes us all very fearful that all rivers will go this way unless somebody acts now...

So, we are establishing a National Wild and Scenic Rivers System...to preserve sections of selected rivers in their free-flowing conditions and to protect their water quality and other vital conservation values.

This is really a monument to you, Secretary Udall. Our children will remember your great adventures and pioneering.”

Editor’s Note: Stewart Udall was Secretary of the Interior in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. He helped pass many of the era’s bedrock conservation laws and halted an effort to build dams that would have flooded parts of the Grand Canyon.



Clinton P. Anderson. Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Senator Clinton P. Anderson served as a U.S. Representative from New Mexico from 1941 until 1945, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture from 1945 until 1948, and a U.S. Senator from 1949 to 1973. Anderson sponsored the final wilderness bill that was signed into law by President Johnson in 1964. Anderson was one of the principle architects of the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. In 1998 a bill was passed to commemorate Anderson’s contribution to the Wilderness Act, which designated “The Senator Clinton P. Anderson Overlook” in the Gila Mountains.

One of his more famous quotes:

“Wilderness is an anchor to windward. Knowing it is there, we can also know that we are still a rich Nation, tending our resources as we should--not a people in despair searching every last nook and cranny of our land for a board of lumber, a barrel of oil, a blade of grass, or a tank of water.” 🐾



"I use the rivers and tributaries for hunting, fishing, and viewing the spectacular scenery and ecological features while on horseback. I am also a trail advocate and a person concerned about retention of public lands and feel wild and scenic designation would help protect my interests."

Gerry Engle, Gila Chapter Backcountry Horsemen



"As a property owner within the Gila National Forest; an Oasis in the desert is how I refer to the Gila River and enjoy sharing its beauty as I hike, camp and backpack with friends along its banks and watershed. The Continental Divide Trail hikers rely on this precious water source, as do the variety of flora and fauna which are provided the critical habitat needed for sustenance and a joy for me to observe."

Carol Martin, Continental Divide Trail Coalition



Years ago, when I first came to these Rivers, the Gila and the San Francisco and tributaries, I spent great lengths of time camping in the lush gentle bends, swimming in the clear deep pools, warming on the sunny rocks, seeing bear, hearing mountain lion call, soaking in the warm waters. These are the places our children want to play, wild, magical places. These places will continue to enrich and nurture humanity and must be permanently protected.

Claire Bergeron, Catron County resident and landowner



"Sportsmen and sportswomen have long understood the value of the Gila River, not only because it is a place where we find peace in the world, but also a place where if we work hard, we can find a meal or two. Let's work together to permanently protect our Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Gila."

Jason Amaro, Grant County Hunter / Angler



Twenty-five years ago, the San Francisco River Canyon came down the beaver in early desire to be designated Wild and Scenic.

Ken Lee, Catron County landowner



President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act into law as others look on. October 2, 1968. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons.



"Some of my fondest childhood memories are picnicking at the river and playing in the water, trying to catch frogs and the little baby fish that now I know are minnows. As an adult doing conservation work with the Upper Gila Watershed Alliance (UGWA), now I realize how important it is to protect the Gila because it is critical habitat for species like the minnow. Its important that each new generation gets to experience the pure joy of playing in the river and encountering all the life found there."

Cindy Renee Provencio, Candidate, Grant County Commission, District 2

Photo: Michelle Reed



"Throughout our planet wild places are disappearing and under constant threat. River walking in the wild waters of the Gila National Forest is amazing! We are so lucky to have these unique places to honor and protect by getting them designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers. The joy they bring to my life cannot be duplicated."

Lisa Fields, Private Property Owner, Certified Crop Advisor CCA-retired

2014

2016

2016-2018

2018

Gila River Timeline



years ago, my first visit to the
o Canyon--beautiful, remote
n--watching the bighorns
the canyon walls and seeing
arly dawn. I've never lost the
ieve this could be desig-
and Scenic Wilderness.
atron County resident and

1924

Gila first administratively protected
Wilderness in the world

1932

Gila National Forest split the Gila
Wilderness in half with the North
Star Road

1946

Bureau of Reclamation recommended Hooker
Dam site near Gila Wilderness

1964

Passage of the Wilderness Act

1968

Passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

1970's

Opponents fight Hooker Dam, which would have
transformed some 20 miles of the wild Gila River within
the Gila Wilderness into a dead slack pool all the way
back to its confluence with Sapillo Creek

1974

Introduction of a bill to designate portions of the Gila
River, the San Francisco River and the Chama River for
study as potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic
Rivers System by Reps. Manuel Lujan Jr., R-N.M., and Harold Runnels,
D-N.M. Sections of the Chama were designated. The Gila and San
Francisco rivers were forgotten.

1977

Hooker Dam plans abandoned

1980's

Numerous alternative dam sites considered, including the Conner Dam
and Mangas Creek sites (the Conner Dam site would have been at the end
of the Middle Box of the Gila at the upper end of Redrock Valley. New Mexico
Wild has proposed the Middle Box for Wilderness designation)
Conner Dam and Mangas Creek diversion proposals defeated

2004

Arizona Water Settlement Agreement Act signed into law

New Mexico Unit Agreement signed; Diversion proposed
Turkey Creek diversion site proposed immediately adjacent
to the Gila Wilderness; New Mexico Wild has proposed Turkey
Creek for Wilderness designation

June 3: New Mexico Wild 50-mile staff backpacking trip along the Gila River
commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

Proponents of Turkey Creek diversion abandon site in face of overwhelming opposition

Fierce community opposition to diversion proposal continues

50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act



FAQ about Wild & Scenic Rivers

1. Why did Congress pass the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act? Congress passed the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act at the height of the modern dam-building era in order to ensure that the construction of new dams is balanced with the protection of select free-flowing rivers that possess nationally significant values. This landmark law is the highest form of protection for rivers in the United States. In the words of Congress: "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations."

2. How does the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protect rivers? The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protects rivers in five major ways:

- It bans the construction of new federally-licensed dams and other harmful water development projects;
- It ensures water quality is maintained and, where possible, enhanced;
- It creates a federally-reserved water right for the minimum amount of water necessary to maintain a river's special values;
- It restricts activities that would harm a river's special values;
- And it requires the development of a Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP) to guide management along designated rivers for a period of 10-20 years.

3. Are there different classifications under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act that reflect the condition of a river at the time it is designated? Designated rivers are classified in one of three categories depending upon the extent of development and accessibility along each section:

- **Wild** rivers are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive, and waters unpolluted.
- **Scenic** rivers are free of impoundments with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive, and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads. These segments are more developed than "wild" rivers and less developed than "recreational" rivers.
- **Recreational** rivers are readily accessible by road or railroad, may have some development along their shoreline, and may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

4. How many rivers are in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System? As of September 2011, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System includes 203 river segments comprising 12,598 river miles. That translates to approximately 0.4% of the river miles in the United States. By comparison, more than 75,000 large dams have modified at least 600,000 miles of rivers across the country, or approximately 17% of the river miles in the United States.

5. How are rivers added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System? Typically, a river becomes Wild and Scenic first by being categorized as "eligible" for designation by the appropriate land management agency (Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, etc.), although Congress has designated rivers that were not previously found eligible for protection. Any section of river that is free-flowing and possesses one or more "outstandingly remarkable values" can be found eligible for Wild and Scenic protection. Rivers can be added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in one of two ways. The most common way is for Congress to pass Wild and Scenic legislation that is signed into law by the president. The less traditional way is for the governor of a state to petition the secretary of the interior to add a river to the system.

6. How does Wild and Scenic designation affect public access to rivers for fishing, hunting, camping and other forms of recreation? Wild and Scenic designation neither limits the public from accessing public lands within designated river corridors nor opens private lands to public access. Designation has no effect on fishing and hunting, as those activities are regulated under state laws. Where hunting and fishing were allowed prior to designation, they may continue. In general, Wild and Scenic designation does not restrict boating access unless specific issues have been identified in the river management planning process.

7. Is livestock grazing allowed in Wild and Scenic river corridors? Generally, livestock grazing and related infrastructure are not affected by Wild and Scenic designation, with the caveat that agricultural practices should be similar in nature and intensity to those present in the river corridor at the time of designation.

8. Does the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act restrict development on private lands within designated river corridors? No. Under the act, the federal government has no authority to regulate or zone private lands. Land use controls on private lands are solely a matter of state and local zoning. Although the act includes provisions encouraging the protection of river values through state and local land use planning, there are no binding provisions on local governments. In the absence of state or local river protection provisions, the federal government may seek to protect values by providing technical assistance, entering into agreements with landowners and/or through the purchase of easements, exchanges or acquisition of private lands.

9. How does Wild and Scenic designation affect water rights? Wild and Scenic designation has no effect on existing valid water rights or interstate water compacts. Existing irrigation systems and other water development facilities are not disturbed. Alterations to existing systems and new water projects that require a federal permit may be allowed as long as they don't have an adverse effect on the values of the river. ▲



WAR on the GILA

Holloman Air Force Base is planning military training exercises on a scale that would be calamitous to the peace, quiet and solitude of our state's largest and oldest Wilderness area. The base proposes to conduct 10,000 sorties annually above the Gila National Forest and the Gila and Aldo Leopold Wilderness areas. These overflights will be low altitude, roaring above the ground at 500 feet above the national forest and 2,000 feet above Wilderness. The base also proposes to drop 30,000 magnesium flares and "defensive chaff" each year during the sorties. The proposal would essentially make all the Wilderness areas, Wilderness Study Areas and the entire Gila National Forest look and sound like a war zone.

Upon learning of the proposal, New Mexico Wild immediately drafted a letter to Holloman asking that the scoping period be reopened and extended and that they have a public meeting in Silver City, something they had inexplicably not done. They relented and ultimately presented their plans at a special standing-room-only Grant County Commission meeting in November. New Mexico Wild led efforts to organize a community rally beforehand. The rally drew 300 people, including local elected officials, business owners, sportsmen organizations, outfitters, veterans and conservation groups. **Their message was clear – the community will not stand for this.**

We submitted formal scoping comments outlining the reasons we believe the Gila is an inappropriate place for F-16 trainings, including the impact to wilderness values, health concerns, the harmful effects to wildlife and the importance of protected public lands to the economic health and vitality of nearby communities.

We are insisting that Holloman do a much better job of reaching out to the public, provide much more information about the proposal and answer many outstanding questions. Our questions include:

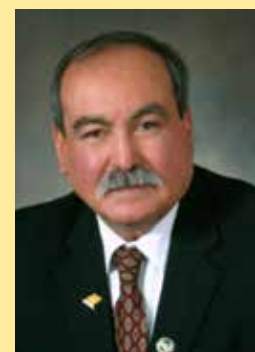
- why can't the base use Department of Defense lands to meet its training objectives?
- what is the fire risk associated with spraying 30,000 magnesium flares over the forest each year? and
- what are the consequences to human health, wildlife, waterways and the land from exposure to contaminants like chromium and lead chaff?

We appreciate the important role Holloman plays in our national defense and understand the need to train pilots to maintain readiness. We're proud to have so many veterans as New Mexico Wild members and supporters. Indeed, veterans' groups have been strong allies of ours in the battle for public lands, including in our national monument campaigns. These groups know that the peace and space and beauty of protected public lands offer solace and healing for many returning combat veterans. We think protecting America's first Wilderness is patriotic and that there are other areas more appropriate to conduct training exercises.

The enormity of this threat absolutely requires we do everything in our power to prevent this proposal from being realized. We need your help to stop this proposal which would destroy the wild qualities of America's first Wilderness. The next formal step in the process is the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, expected this fall. There will be more opportunities for public comment, and we have been assured that there will be additional public meetings, including in Silver City. In the meantime, go to our website at www.nmwild.org or www.peacefulgilaskies.com to learn what you can do to help stop this proposal. 🐾

"As a veteran and former Navy SEAL, I know that the readiness of our nation's military is a top priority, including for those of us here in southern New Mexico," said Grant County resident Brett Myrick. "But this is exactly the wrong place for screaming jets and incendiary devices. People live and visit here because of the peace and quiet of our public lands. This would ruin what I love most."

Brett Myrick (right) hiked with Interior Secretary Zinke during his National Monument Review visit.



"Now is an important time for local residents to speak up and have a voice in the process," said veteran and state Rep. Rudy Martinez, D-Bayard. "Our community stands to be impacted

greatly, and we need clear information to evaluate this proposal and help the Air Force understand the concerns we have about the future of our community and the need to protect what makes this region special—our protected public lands."

New Mexico Representative Rudy Martinez



"Our business and local economy depend on tourism and outdoor recreation," said Chris Schlabach, co-owner of Gila Hike & Bike. "One of the distinctive features of the Gila National Forest and Wilderness is how quiet and remote it is. With low altitude flyovers, both tourism and ecosystems will suffer."

Gila Hike & Bike is a vital part of Silver City's economy. Photo by Christina Steele, courtesy of Silver City Daily Press.

GILA AREA LOOP HIKE: Little Bear Canyon

Round-trip length: 10.5 miles
Low and high elevations: 5,700 and 6,300 feet
Difficulty: moderate

Administration: Gila Wilderness Ranger District

This hike allows you to experience the Gila Wilderness uplands as well as the popular canyon bottoms. Begin at TJ Corral near Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument.

Trail 729 climbs not too steeply through grassy meadows onto the upland separating the West Fork and Middle Fork drainages. Here you meander through open ponderosa forest before an interesting descent though a tributary canyon of the Middle Fork. At about 3.5 miles, you reach the Middle Fork of the Gila. To make the loop, take the Middle Fork Trail, No. 157, downstream (lots of river crossings) about

5.5 miles to the ranger station and national monument visitor center. before the visitor center you will come to Lightfoot Hot Spring near the river. From the visitor center, it is about a 1.5-mile hike back to TJ Corral.

For an adventurous overnight trip with solitude, extend this loop hike to reach The Meadows. Follow Trail 729 to its junction with Trail 164. Continue along Trail 164 across the uplands to its junction with Trail 28, which descends from the uplands into Big Bear Canyon then climbs again before descending to The Meadows. From The Meadows, connect with Trail 157 (Middle Fork Trail), which follows the Middle Fork of the Gila River. Expect slower travel and multiple river crossings for the remainder of this hike and don't forget to save time to enjoy Lightfoot Hot Spring before the end of your trip.

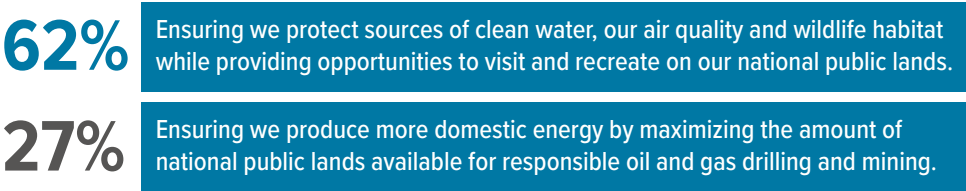
When water levels are high, exercise caution with all river crossings. 🌊

For more hikes and other information about New Mexico's public lands, order your copy of Wild Guide: Passport to New Mexico Wilderness. See page 24 for more info.

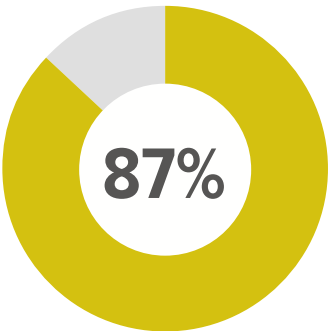
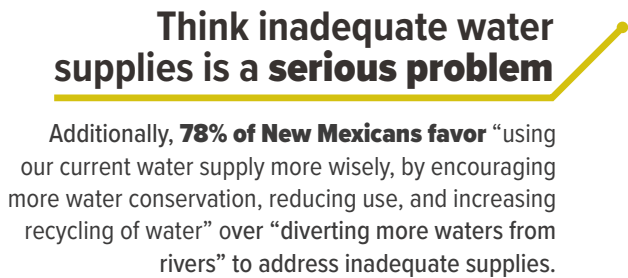


New Mexico

Would you prefer the Trump administration place more emphasis on...



56% of New Mexicans disapprove of the way the Trump administration is handling issues related to land, water and wildlife. Only 34% approve.



76% of New Mexicans consider themselves conservationists and 77% outdoor recreation enthusiasts



New Mexico’s outdoor recreation economy

92% of New Mexicans think the outdoor recreation economy — meaning people who come to hunt, fish, camp, see wildlife, as well as those who manufacture and sell equipment for those activities — is important to the economic future of the state.

78% of New Mexicans think the presence of public lands and a lifestyle of outdoor recreation gives the West an economic advantage over other parts of the country.

SCORCHED EARTH

THE FOLLOWING LIST IS A SELECTION OF PRESIDENT TRUMP'S
CATASTROPHIC ADMINISTRATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL DECISIONS.
AND HE'S STILL AT IT.

January 2017: All references to climate change are deleted from the White House and EPA websites; the National Park Service is forbidden from using social media. • Trump signs presidential memoranda approving the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. By November, the Keystone pipeline will have leaked about 210,000 gallons of oil in South Dakota and the pipeline will be temporarily shut down. • Trump mandates all studies by EPA scientists will be subject to review by political appointees before release. EPA and other agency officials are forbidden from talking to reporters or posting web content online. • **February:** Senate confirms ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State. • Army Corps of Engineers reverses its stance and approves an easement to allow completion of the Dakota Access Pipeline. • Trump signs bill repealing anti-corruption regulations that required fossil fuel companies to disclose payments to foreign governments. • President repeals the Stream Protection Rule, which protected waterways from coal mining waste. • Senate confirms Scott Pruitt as the head of the EPA. • **March:** Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke overturns a ban on lead in ammunition and fishing tackle on federal lands and waters, including in national wildlife refuges. • EPA Administrator Pruitt announces he will stop collecting methane emissions data from 15,000 oil and gas companies. • EPA's Office of Science and Technology removes the word "science" from its mission statement. • Pruitt says carbon dioxide's role in the changing climate remains unclear. • EPA announces it will reconsider emissions standards on passenger cars and light trucks. • President Trump signs a congressional resolution repealing the Bureau of Land Management's Planning 2.0 Rule, which provided for greater collaboration with local governments in land-use planning, encouraged management of wildlife migration corridors and gave the public a greater say in the early part of the planning process. • President issues an executive order rescinding Climate Action Plan, an Obama order on preparing the U.S. for the impacts of climate change, two 2013 presidential memoranda on power sector carbon pollution standards and resource mitigation and the Council on Environmental Quality's greenhouse gas emissions and climate change guidance. His order also calls for review of the Obama-era Clean Power Plan and "all agency actions that potentially burden the safe, efficient development of domestic energy resources." • Trump charges the Interior Department with reviewing rules for oil and gas drilling in national parks. • Interior Secretary Zinke reverses a 2016 moratorium on federal coal leasing and revokes an Obama-era order to improve Department of Interior environmental mitigation policies and procedures. • EPA Administrator Pruitt denies petition to ban the neurotoxin pesticide chlorpyrifos, despite EPA studies showing it harms brain development in children. • **April:** Trump signs bill overturning a ban on killing wolf pups and hibernating bears in and around their dens near in Alaskan wildlife refuges. • Trump administration withdraws guidance that called for federal agencies to include greenhouse gas emissions in environmental reviews. • EPA announces it will reconsider power plant emissions rules restricting heavy metal contamination of waterways and regulations restricting pollutant emissions from oil and gas industry sources. • Trump instructs Interior Secretary Zinke to review 27 national monuments created since 1996 to determine if presidents exceeded their authority when protecting large tracts of already-public land under the Antiquities Act of 1906. • Trump signs executive order mandating review of national marine sanctuaries and marine national monuments designated or expanded in the previous 10 years, as well as review offshore oil and gas leasing. The order also reverses previous ban on drilling in the Beaufort and Chukchi seas off Alaska and in portions of the Atlantic Ocean. • EPA shuts down climate change webpage. Parts of the page later reappear, but with references to climate change removed. • **June:** President withdraws from Paris Climate Accord. • Zinke recommended Bears Ears National Monument in southern Utah be shrunk. • EPA announces a two-year pause on regulations that would reduce air pollution from oil and gas industry facilities. • Zinke announces a rule to delist Yellowstone grizzly bears from Endangered Species Act protection. • EPA announces it will scrap the Clean Water Rule, established to determine which streams, lakes and wetlands are protected under the Clean Water Act. • **August:** Department of Homeland security announces waiver of 37 environmental laws in construction of border wall prototypes. • Interior Department relaxes aspects of sage grouse protection to help increase energy production on federal lands. • EPA and Department of Transportation announce reconsideration of Clean Car Standards, which would reduce pollution and increased fuel efficiency, for model years 2022 through 2025. EPA announces it will reconsider greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy standards for medium and heavy engines in response to trucking industry complaints. • **September:** President's Council on Environmental Quality to change regulations applying the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to infrastructure projects. • Interior Secretary Zinke's report on national monuments is leaked to the public, recommends reducing four national monuments and modifying six others. • **October:** EPA begins repeal of Clean Power Plan, designed to reduce power plant emissions of greenhouse gases. • President Trump nominates noted climate skeptic Kathleen Hartnett-White to head the Council on Environmental Quality. Her nomination is later denied and sent back to the White House in December. • Fish and Wildlife Service denies Endangered Species Act protections to the Pacific walrus, threatened by climate change; the Northern Rocky Mountain fisher, threatened by trapping and by logging of its old-growth forest habitats; and 23 other rare species. • Department of Interior announces largest-ever oil and gas lease auction, covering 77 million acres of offshore deposits in the Gulf of Mexico. • National Park Service announces plan to hike entrance fees at 17 of its most popular parks. • **November:** • Trump administration proposes rule to federalize regulation of drift gillnets used to catch swordfish on the West Coast. The rule would end California's right to prevent the deadly entanglements of sea turtles, whales and dolphins. • Trump administration reverses the ban on elephant trophy imports. • Fish and Wildlife Service directed to end the Red Wolf recovery program and declare the Red Wolf extinct. • Trump administration approves an oil company's request to explore for oil in the Arctic Ocean. • **December:** Trump signs executive order slashing size of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments, eliminating protections for more than 2 million acres. • Fish and Wildlife Service finalizes a flawed Mexican wolf recovery plan relying heavily on wolf populations in Mexico, which are unlikely to thrive due to the prevalence of private ranchlands and stand to be isolated from U.S. wolf populations by the border wall. The recovery plan also excludes Mexican wolves from suitable habitats north of Interstate 40. • Zinke announces plan to build an 11-mile road through Alaska's Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, which would destroy wilderness and cause "irreparable damage" to wildlife, according to federal environmental impact studies. • Trump drops climate change from list of national security threats. • Toxic chemical bans indefinitely postponed for methylene chloride, N-methylpyrrolidone (NMP) and trichloroethylene (TCE). • Trump signs tax overhaul bill that includes a provision opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas leasing. • Interior Department issues a solicitor's opinion stating it will stop enforcing the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in cases where corporations kill birds without deliberately seeking to cause their deaths. • EPA announces plan to consider increasing the use of neonicotinoid insecticides known as thiamethoxam, which is proven to be deadly to bees. • Bureau of Land Management repeals fracking standards on federal and tribal lands. • Trump administration proposes to remove offshore drilling safety regulations put in place after the deadly Deepwater Horizon disaster. **January 2018:** • Zinke opens the Atlantic, Pacific and Alaskan coasts to offshore drilling (then announces via Twitter Florida is being exempted). • BLM and Forest Service lower livestock grazing fees.

"This is just the tip of the iceberg. Next year will be an exciting year for the Department and the American people."

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke
in a Dec. 28, 2017, press release.

Sources: Coalition to Protect America's National Parks; Erik Molvar, executive director, and Kelly Fuller, energy campaign coordinator, Western Watersheds Project



CASTNER RANGE



Castner Range in El Paso. Photo: Mark Klune, courtesy of CastnerRangeNationalMonument.org.

Conservationists and community members have been pushing to protect the 7,081-acre Castner Range in El Paso, Texas, since the early 1970s. In recent years there has been a groundswell of popular support for designating the Castner Range, which is surrounded by the Franklin Mountains State Park in El Paso, a national monument

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which was signed into law on Dec. 12, 2017, included protections for the Castner

Range so that it will remain as open space and free from roads, motorized vehicles and commercial development.

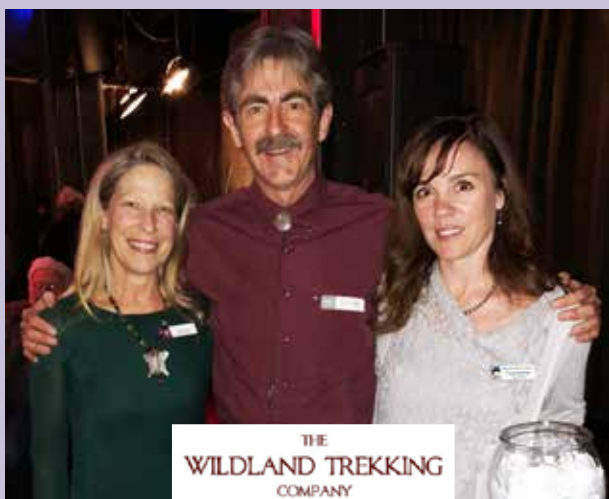
Although the area did not gain national monument status, which may be granted through a presidential proclamation under the Antiquities Act of 1906, the language in the act provides similar protections. The area contains numerous prehistoric and historic archeological sites as well as important wildlife habitat, among other cultural and natural resources.

Rep. Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas, introduced the protective language that was included in the NDAA.

The Castner Range was used by the military for artillery training between 1939 and 1966. It will remain closed to the public for now. **We join our Texas friends, the Franklin Mountain Wilderness Coalition and others, in celebrating this victory and congratulate them on their perseverance and foresight.** 🏔️

RAFFLE RAISES FUNDS FOR NEW MEXICO WILD

In December, New Mexico Wild raffled off a Grand Canyon trip. Julie McIntyre won the \$1,000 guided trek, donated by Wildland Trekking Company. Julie is on the left, pictured with Wildland Trekking staffer Doug Campbell and New Mexico Wild Deputy Director Tisha Broska at our holiday party, just after the winner was announced. Thank you to everyone who entered the raffle for this fabulous trip, and thanks to Wildland Trekking Company for their generous donation. Check them out at www.wildlandtrekking.com.



STORY RIDERS PROGRAM

New Mexico Wild staffer (and artist) Lois Manno worked with fifth-graders from Dolores Gonzales Elementary School in Albuquerque, as part of the Story Riders program. Run by Marco Sandoval at the Center of Southwest Culture, these kids spend a semester exploring the Rio Grande Bosque by bicycle. They are introduced to concepts of land conservation, water management, and the importance of wild spaces. Lois helped the kids translate their Bosque experiences using bike parts, natural objects collected on their rides, and art materials to make mandalas inspired by the wheels of their bikes. The loaner bicycles, provided by Esperanza Bicycle Safety Education Center, are given to the kids at the end of the program. Esperanza's flagship program is Earn-A-Bike, in which anyone who signs up for a 3- to 4-hour class on cycling receives a free, refurbished bicycle at the end of the class. New Mexico Wild provided the art supplies, and it was a wonderful experience for everyone!

WELCOME NEW STAFF!



Welcome to Administrative Assistant Kerry Renshaw

As a resident of New Mexico since 1979, Kerry has developed a love for the state's mountains and deserts. She has been to every corner of the state and particularly likes to visit the Gila Wilderness, Ojito Wilderness and the Jemez area. She and her family love to travel and they frequently try to find areas of old growth forest wherever they are visiting. Now she is bringing her organizational skills to the task of protecting and enhancing New Mexico's wilderness areas with

New Mexico Wild. As a former public school educator, Kerry believes in the importance of civic engagement in the political process and active participation in community life. Her goal is to help ensure there are wilderness areas for future generations to experience and enjoy.



Welcome Grecia Nuñez

New Mexico Wild is pleased to welcome Grecia Nuñez to fill a new full-time Public Lands Fellow position. She is based out of our Las Cruces office and working in southern New Mexico to defend the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument and other public lands, advance conservation

campaigns such as the permanent protection of the Gila River, and grow, diversify and engage our base of grassroots support.

Born and raised in Las Cruces, she brings with her a wealth of conservation and organizing experience, most recently finishing up a stint as a Peace Corps volunteer in Panama. Before that she worked at Groundwork Doña Ana, partnering with the National Park Service, AmeriCorps and the Student Conservation Association. Grecia led underrepresented youth on environmental projects, including an archaeological survey of the Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks when it was being considered for designation as a national monument.

She has lived and worked in many wild places from Yellowstone National Park to Denali National Park, "but southern New Mexico with its beautiful sunsets and enchanted spirit will always be home," she says.

Grecia earned a bachelor of science in geography and a bachelor of arts in Spanish from New Mexico State University. One of her professional goals is to one day be the superintendent of a national park – and we're betting on it.

Get your New Mexico Wild hat! Order online for \$20 at nmwild.org/shop



New styles! Knit Beanies! Camo!

WILDERNESS RANGER PROGRAM GROWING IN 2018

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!



Wilderness Ranger Rhett Spencer on the job in the Columbine-Hondo Wilderness. Photo: Josh Parken

10 full-time rangers working in the Carson, Santa Fe, Cibola and Lincoln national forests. This public-private partnership with the U.S. Forest Service is designed to increase stewardship capacity and facilitate public engagement across New Mexico's Wilderness areas.

Our Wilderness rangers have many roles to play. Their work includes engaging volunteers and youth in Wilderness education and stewardship projects, providing boots-on-the-ground information to visitors and forest staff, and collecting a variety of Wilderness data, including invasive species inventories, campsite inventories, solitude monitoring assessments, trail condition assessments and more.

Following up on a wildly successful 2017 field season, we are pleased to announce an expansion of our Wilderness Ranger Program for 2018. From May to October, New Mexico Wild will have

We are looking for volunteers to participate in a variety of projects alongside our rangers. For more information about volunteer opportunities, please contact Joelle Marier at joelle@nmwild.org.



Wilderness Rangers, Hailey Henck (left) and Jade McLaughlin (right), at camp in the Apache Kid Wilderness. Photo: Joelle Marier

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Visit our website at www.nmwild.org/events-outings for more information and to sign up.
Or call Evan at our office, 505-843-8696.



April 14
Day hike in the Gila Middle Box
New Mexico Wild and The Wilderness Society will lead a day hike in the

Gila Middle Box. This area features 13 miles of the rugged and scenic Gila River Middle Box gorge, as well as tributaries and surrounding mountains that offer outstanding opportunities for rafting, kayaking, and excellent bird habitat. This section of the Gila River possesses several "outstandingly remarkable values" that merit its eligibility as a part of the National Wild and Scenic River System.



Re-Wilding the Self
April 21, 2018 | 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The second in a benefit series of Inspired and Informed by Nature Retreats for New Mexico Wild, co-hosted by Cheryl Slover-Linett of the nonprofit Lead Feather and Larry Glover of the Wild Resiliency Institute. Join us for a retreat day with light hiking intermixed with structured exercises in the Santa Fe National Forest and Pecos Wilderness near Cowles.



April 28
Lower San Francisco River Canyon Hike
Join New Mexico Wild and The Wilderness Society for a day hike in the Lower

San Francisco River Canyon. With its towering cliff walls, hot springs, ancient cottonwoods and native walnut and giant Arizona sycamore trees, this river corridor is home to a remarkable diversity of birds, fish and mammals.



New Mexico Outdoor Economics CONFERENCE
MAY 3 & 4 LAS CRUCES
Creating Jobs from Protected Public Lands

Las Cruces Outdoor Economics Conference
May 3-4, 2018
New Mexico Wild is one of the sponsors

of this Las Cruces event, held at the Hotel Encanto. This free conference was organized to help advance economic development strategies and opportunities connected to protected public lands in New Mexico.



May 12 - Day Hike in Mineral Creek
Come with New Mexico Wild and The Wilderness Society on a day hike along Mineral Creek. This area features outstanding geology, narrow slot canyons, and Mineral Creek itself. There is also a very rich history that includes conflicts between

Chiricahua Apaches and miners in the 1880s. There is still evidence from this 19th Century mining activity throughout the lower section of Mineral Creek, which inspires awe and a sense of wonder.



Rio Grande Bosque Float | May 12, 2018
Join New Mexico Wild and Quiet Waters Paddling Adventures for a relaxing and educational paddle through the Corrales Bosque.



Gila Wilderness Pack Mule Trip – Wild and Scenic Rivers June 4 – 7, 2018 Join NM Wild and Gila Backcountry Services for a pack mule trip into the heart of the Gila Wilderness along the Gila River. We will base camp near the confluence of the Gila River and Sapillo Creek, and spend our days exploring this segment of the Gila River and surrounding canyons. Expect to encounter outstanding scenery, geology, wildlife and cultural values, learn about how NM Wild is working to permanently protect the Gila River and other river segments as Wild and Scenic.



Middle Box Full Day Trip
June 9, 2018

This scenic Class II-III section of the Rio Grande is visited by far fewer people every summer than the popular Taos Box and Lower Gorge. A 1-mile hike will take us from the rim of the gorge into the heart of the Rio Grande del

Norte National Monument.



Rio Chama Full Day Trip
Aug. 4, 2018

The Rio Chama in Northern New Mexico is America's newest Wild and Scenic River. This 8-mile stretch begins below a secluded Benedictine Abbey and ends just above Abiquiu Reservoir, where this silty desert river rolls to a halt among the rainbow cliffs of this remote Four Corners location.



Gila Wilderness Pack Mule Trip – Mexican Gray Wolves | August 31 – September 3 (3 Nights, 4 Days)
Aeroplane Mesa to Middle Fork of the Gila River | Join NM Wild and Gila Backcountry

Services for a pack mule trip into the headwaters of the Gila Wilderness along the Middle Fork of the Gila River. We will base camp along the Middle Fork of the Gila River, and spend our days exploring some of the wildest lands in the heart of Mexican grey wolf habitat in the Gila Wilderness. Expect to encounter outstanding scenery, geology, wildlife and cultural values.



San Juan River Trip
Sept. 13-16

Join us as we explore 86 miles of the San Juan River in southeast Utah. Along the way we will visit

Ancestral Puebloan cliff dwellings and pictographs, splash our way along the gentle river, and enjoy tales of this storied place with award-winning author and historian Andrew Gulliford. 🐾




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Citizen Eyes and Ears Needed: Protecting New Mexico's public land is a big job, and we need your help!



New Mexico Wilderness Alliance does its best to ensure that federal agencies are managing our public lands in accordance with the law and to let them know when there are problems on the ground.

You can help us by being our eyes and ears. When you see violations or abuse in New Mexico's designated Wilderness areas and other protected places, please let us know so we can report it to the responsible agency.

Some common problems are:

- ATVs or mountain bikes in designated Wilderness areas
- Broken fences
- Illegal wood cutting
- Cows in rivers and streams

To report a violation, please visit nmwild.org/violation. Thanks for helping us keep the Wild West wild!



UNM Wild Volunteers Help with River Restoration Project

By Luisa Pennington

University of New Mexico students from UNM Wild helped plant Goodding's willow, cottonwood and coyote willow cuttings during the Bosque Cultural Restoration Project in January. The project was sponsored by the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, city of Albuquerque Open Space Division and Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, and drew dozens of volunteers to the bosque near the National Hispanic Cultural Center.

Volunteers learned the proper way to plant a tree, including packing dirt around the new transplants to prevent air bubbles from forming underneath the surface because the resulting air pockets could cause the trees to die. The shining sun was accompanied by a light breeze, which created the perfect conditions for a Saturday outdoors. Not only was the volunteer opportunity open to all ages, but people from many different backgrounds were represented. Specifically, project participants included UNM students majoring in biology, English, business, sustainability and environmental science, just to name a few.

In addition to participating in the Bosque Restoration Project, UNM Wild spent part



Photos by Abigail Matanis

of its spring semester helping to organize the Telluride MountainFilm on Tour in Albuquerque. In partnership with ASUNM Southwest Film Center, adventure-packed screenings about exploring and preserving the Earth were held in the UNM Student Union Building on Feb. 2 and 3. In all, the films were inspiring to both current adventurers and wilderness explorers to come.



For more information about UNM Wild and how to get involved, go to facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/unmwild/ or email: unmwild@unm.edu

Congratulations 2018 Wolf Stamp Artist Nayana Rathmalgoda



Lobo Reincarnated Artist Nayana and his dog Angel.

Known artistically as Lobo Reincarnated, Nayana Rathmalgoda has been drawing since the age of 4 years old and is entirely self-taught. This critically-acclaimed wildlife artist has shown his work internationally and is currently based in Australia. Mexican wolves have long been a subject of his work both through art and via literature reviews, having grown up following their reintroduction efforts, and he finds them to be one of the most striking and beautifully-colored of all the wolf species. The piece featured on this stamp was painted during his time in New Mexico in late 2016/early 2017, with a focus on coexistence with Mexican wolves using proven non-lethal deterrent methods, livestock guardian dogs and range riders, to help keep wolves alive in the wild. Passionate about wildlife conservation with a current focus on the illegal wildlife trade, he's working on a project collaboration with Breaking the Brand concerning the trade in rhino horn, for which he presented at the TEDx stage in South Dakota last October.

His work can be found online at www.lobokingofcurrumpaw.com or via Instagram at [@ellobo88](https://www.instagram.com/ellobo88).



Photo courtesy Defenders of Wildlife.

Order your 2018 Wolf Stamp at www.nmwild.org/support-us/shop

Looking to volunteer in wilderness?
Check out our website at nmwild.org for upcoming volunteer service projects.

Photos: Mark Allison

STATE LEGISLATURE UPDATE

By Judy Calman, staff



Santa Fe Roundhouse; Photo: Ken Lund

New Mexico Wild worked on several issues at the Roundhouse during this year’s legislative session, which ran from Jan. 16 to Feb. 15:

Senate Bill 72 (Morales), House Bill 127 (Martinez, McCamley) and House Bill 330 (Martinez): “Southwest NM Water Projects”

These three bills would have steered funds away from proposals to dam and divert the Gila River for the benefit of only a few and toward infrastructure projects in four southwestern New Mexico counties, which would benefit many. Unfortunately, all three bills died in committee. The conservation community will continue to engage the Legislature on this issue, and we expect to see similar bills in 2019.

Senate Memorial 94 (Stewart) and House Memorial 81 (Chasey, Garcia-Richard, Louis): “State Agency Decisions Affecting Environment”

SM 94 and HM 81 calls for stakeholders to come together to talk about the potential implementation of a state version of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and present the findings at an interim committee meeting sometime this year.

NEPA requires federal agencies to notify the public about proposals and to consider public input; the law also requires federal agencies to consider the potential environmental impacts

of their proposals before making a decision. There is no similar law in New Mexico for state lands and state agencies.

We are pleased to announce that this memorial was passed by the full Senate. We can move forward with the goal to introduce actual legislation for 2019.

House Memorial 18 (Armstrong, Dow): “Restoration of NM Water Rights”

This memorial would have formally approved the autonomy of the New Mexico CAP Entity, the organization which currently is charged with determining what happens to the money allocated to New Mexico by the Arizona Water Settlements Act and which is advocating for diverting the Gila river. Fortunately, the memorial died in the face of widespread opposition.

Senate Bill 134 (Pirtle): “Transfer of Public Lands Act”

This bill never got a hearing because it was not found to be germane to the budget-related session, but we are highlighting it here to note that so-called “public land seizure” bills are still very much a threat in New Mexico. The bill called for the federal government to immediately give all public lands to the state with the exception of certain Wilderness areas and national parks. We expect this bill to be reintroduced in 2019, and we will fight it every step of the way.

House Memorial 37 (Rubio, Ferrary): “Hispanic New Mexicans and Conservation”

This memorial recognizes the role of New Mexican Hispanics in conservation efforts in the state, and we are happy to say it passed the House.

House Memorial 15 (Small): “Study Creating Office of Outdoor Recreation”

This memorial would have called for studying

the creation of an office of outdoor recreation for New Mexico but unfortunately was not heard in a committee this session. This is another priority for New Mexico Wild.

Senate Memorial 43 (Munoz) and House Memorial 85 (Lente): “Chaco Canyon Landscape Preservation”

These memorials sought to ask the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to protect the Greater Chaco Region from additional fracking activity until after the agency’s Resource Management Plan Amendment is finalized and to consult more comprehensively with tribes about the process and its plans. Each of these memorials passed through their first committees but unfortunately neither of them made to a vote on either chamber’s floor.

House Memorial 52 (Rubio, Garcia-Richard): “Border Wall Environmental Impact”

This memorial would have asked the State Land Office to study the potential environmental impacts of creating a border wall, including impacts to wildlife. The memorial passed through its first committee but was not heard on the House floor.

House Memorial 53 (Rubio, Garcia-Richard): “State Trust Land for Ecotourism”

The State Land Office would have been asked to study ways to increase opportunities for ecotourism on trust lands in New Mexico under this memorial. The memorial passed its first committee but was not heard on the House floor.

Senate Joint Memorial 7 (Tallman): “Public Lands Day”

SJM 7 recognizes the value of New Mexico’s public lands. The memorial passed and declared Feb. 2, 2018, to be Public Lands Day at the New Mexico Legislature. 🏔️

Become a Wild One! Monthly giving is the most effective way to support our work.



PHOTO: MIKE GROVES, ORGAN MOUNTAINS, NM

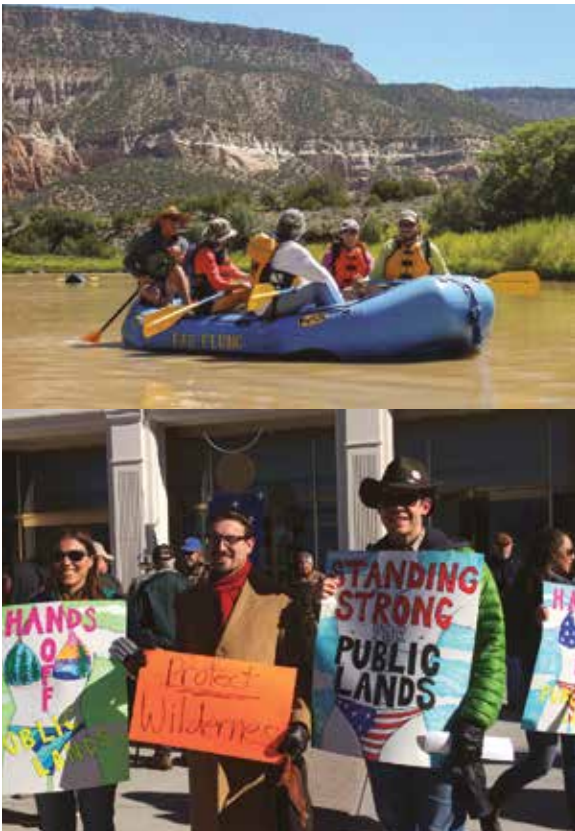
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- Want to breathe fresh air
- Crave wide open spaces



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You can help keep New Mexico Wild!

We advocate for the protection of New Mexico’s wildlands and wilderness areas. Education, service projects, public outreach, special events and grassroots support of citizen wilderness proposals are all ways the Wilderness Alliance strives to protect the rarest and most special of landscapes: those that remain relatively untrammelled by man.

As a member, you’ll receive our quarterly newsletter, e-news and action updates, special advisory newsletters, invitations to members-only events, member discounts and more. Your support is vital to our work.



The Wilderness Alliance is the only nonprofit organization exclusively focused on protecting wilderness areas, wildlands and critical habitat in the state of New Mexico. We push hard for protection for the critically-endangered Mexican gray wolf, we hold land management agencies accountable for following the law, and we build broad grassroots community support for wilderness protection.

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www.nmwild.org

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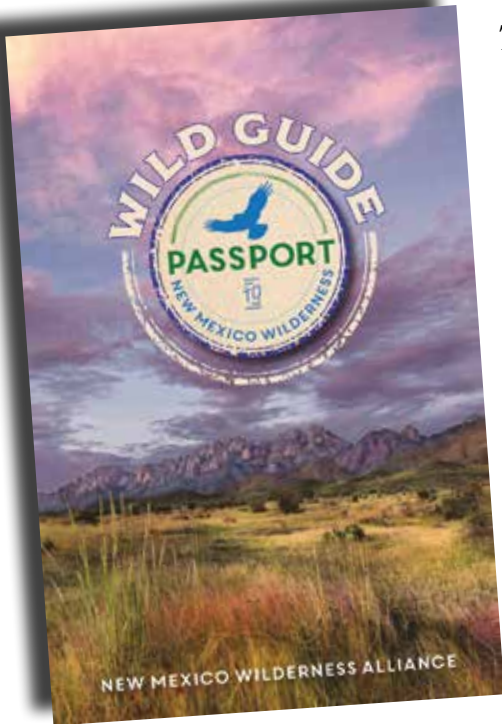
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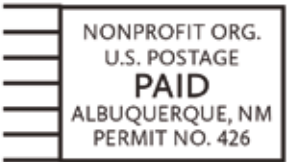


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Raft With Us! See Page 19